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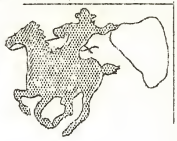
THE MONTANA ROUNDUP OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH BRIEFS



Montana State Board of Health
W. F. Cogswell, M.D., Executive Officer

Division of Industrial Hygiene
Dohrman H. Byers, Director

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INTRODUCING!

The Montana Roundup of Industrial Health Briefs, published and distributed by the Division of Industrial Hygiene of the Montana State Board of Health, will present news and items on the health matters of interest to the industries of Montana. It is our sincere wish to provide information which will enable you to detect and eliminate health hazards in your plant. Absenteeism due to occupational diseases is an unnecessary waste of manpower. Our object is to help you defeat this saboteur of production. Suggestions of topics and briefs which you would like to see in this publication will be gratefully received.

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COLD PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS PAY

The arrival of the season when colds, influenza, sinus trouble and pneumonia cause increased absenteeism and reduced efficiency, requires that action be taken now by industrial management to prevent these losses. One-third of all the time lost from illness is due to the common cold and its complications. The number of cases of respiratory diseases per 1,000 male workers in 1943 was nearly double the number occurring in 1941, as shown by statistics gathered and analyzed by the U. S. Public Health Service.

Industries which have carried on a concentrated campaign to reduce the number of cases of colds and their resulting complications have proved that such a campaign can be effective.

The measures applied have been aimed at preventing the spread of infection, and informing workers on importance of early care when a cold begins. Some industries have experimented with vaccines, others have tried giving workers vitamin preparations, but neither of these have been found

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effective after careful scientific study of the results. General measures of hygiene and sanitation are recommended by public health and medical authorities as the only reliable means of controlling epidemics of colds, grippe and influenza. In the industrial plant these measures are of three kinds -- (1) provision of proper conditions and services for safeguarding employee health, (2) instruction of employees, and (3) requirement of certain actions on their part.

Management can provide properly heated and ventilated workrooms so far as possible preventing unnecessary exposure to cold, and to excessive heating. Protection can be given against constant drafts.

Eating utensils can be properly washed and sterilized to prevent the spread of infection. This safeguard should apply at all times, and should be checked at epidemic periods to be sure that correct practices are being followed. Food handlers having colds should be sent home.

Provision of adequately heated locker and change rooms to allow change of working clothes to dry street clothes at the end of each shift will prevent those whose clothes become wet during work from being chilled while wearing work clothes home.

Employees should be given instruction through various channels----- the plant newspaper, posters, pamphlets, talks, bulletin board notices, and labor-management health committee,-----of precautions they should follow to avoid colds and the possible serious consequences of colds. In this educational campaign, the following precautions can be emphasized:

1. Avoid spray from nose and mouth of persons who are sneezing, or have a running nose, or cough.
2. Stay away from others when having a cold, especially during the first few days. Use a handkerchief, and preferably paper tissues, to cover all sneezes and coughs.
3. Wash hands frequently during epidemics, and always before eating. Avoid handshaking when having a cold.
4. Eat proper and sufficient food three meals a day.
5. Get plenty of sleep (eight hours are needed by most people).
6. Avoid dissipation and unnecessary depletion of energy.
7. Get exercise after work if work requires none.
8. Wear enough clothing to keep warm outdoors, and remove outer clothing indoors.
9. At the beginning of a cold, go to bed, keep warm. Drink fruit juices and other liquids and take only light foods. 24 or 48 hours in bed at the beginning of a cold may prevent spending days or weeks there later with some complication.
10. If you feel feverish and have body aches and weakness, or chest pains, call a doctor. Your "cold" may be influenza or pneumonia. Workers in certain kinds of jobs, especially welders, may have symptoms like those of a cold when the trouble is metal fume fever.

Many agencies can provide educational material on colds, influenza and pneumonia. A pamphlet entitled "But Flu is Tougher", and an accompanying poster with the legend advising "Cover up Coughs and Sneezes", prepared by the U. S. Public Health Service, are available at the Division of Industrial Hygiene. Ask this division for information on other materials.

All plants having medical and nursing service should have employees report to the dispensary at first signs of a cold. If found to have an above normal temperature, these workers should be sent home after being given advice on treatment to be followed. Since colds are most infectious in the beginning stages, the most effective means of preventing spread is to have all persons with early symptoms go home and stay there, until the infectious period over. Reporting to the dispensary when cold symptoms begin can be made compulsory.

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AT YOUR SERVICE

The Division of Industrial Hygiene was established in the Montana State Board of Health in 1939. Since that time, the Division has been working with management and labor to secure and maintain healthful working conditions in all industries in the state. The trained personnel of the Division are ready and eager at all times to be of service whether it be supplying a bit of information or making a detailed study of all health hazards in your plant. They have the necessary scientific equipment and the skill to use them to sample and test for a multitude of industrial poisons and hazards. If you have a health problem or even suspect one, consult YOUR Division of Industrial Hygiene; always at YOUR service.

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EYE INJURIES

Each year many man-hours of valuable labor are lost because of eye injuries from flying particles or welding burns. Secondary infections of such injuries may be more serious than the initial trouble. Proper medical care of all eye injuries is an absolute necessity, but must never be accepted as a substitute for adequate protection and safety practices in the first place. Goggles, hoods, shields, etc., are all effective preventative measures when properly used. The rules regarding their use must be rigidly enforced and should be backed up by a live-wire educational program. A man may walk on an artificial leg but he cannot see with a glass eye.

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"Cover every cough and sneeze,
If you don't, you'll spread disease".